

State of the City  
February 19, 2013

Thank you President McCarthy, members of the board, I appreciate the opportunity to join you tonight to share the state of our city.

Tonight marks the 6<sup>th</sup> time I have come before the Board to report the state of our city. I have been fortunate each year to report to you that the state of Nashua is good; in fact it's been great. This year is no exception.

Nashua's continuing story is inspiring in the face of a national economy and to some extent a state economy that is reported in dire condition. We here in Nashua are able to work within a balanced budget, attract businesses, employ workers, improve our infrastructure, update capital equipment, provide quality education, and protect our citizens and property, all while keeping the tax burden on our property owners at a reasonable level.

How do we do this? The city thrives because of the care and nurturing of a community of engaged citizens. As I look around this room and consider the collective effort of this board, along with our colleagues on the other city boards, our exceptional division directors, our dedicated workforce, and our community of engaged citizens and volunteers I am reminded of what a wonderful place Nashua is and remain enthusiastic about what we can continue to accomplish together.

There are so many wonderful people that make up and contribute to this community. There are those that have given a lifetime of effort and care and are still going strong. I want to thank Tom Tessier, this year's Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the year. After serving this nation in Vietnam he came home to Nashua and has been giving of himself in a wide arena of volunteer capacities. He is loyal to his fellow service men and their families. For anyone that didn't make it to the recent Spectacular on Veteran's Day, I suggest you get your tickets early for this year's event. It will not disappoint as long as Tom is involved. Tom is a great example of a community servant and I can't thank him enough for all that he has and continues to do in the community.

Then there's Joy Barrett, Chairman of our Hunt Memorial Building Board of Trustees, recognized by WZID as one of Twenty Outstanding Women You Should Know in NH. Her energy and dedication to her community from the Hunt to the Nashua Education Foundation, Joy is...well....outstanding!

The many engaged parents and volunteers have once again brought distinction upon our school district as it was recognized as a 2011-2012 Blue Ribbon school district for volunteerism at the annual New Hampshire Partners

in Education Recognition Breakfast in Manchester for the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

When we discuss people contributing to the success and well being of our city we certainly should think about our city Divisions and the results of their successful planning along with plans for the near future.

Let's begin with Public Health. Building on the City's 2011 Community Health Assessment, in 2012 the Department of Public Health and Community Services brought together area elected officials, businesses, agencies, healthcare providers, schools, and other community partners to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan.

Focused on improving the problem areas of Access to Healthcare, Mental Health, and Obesity, the plan identifies specific objectives and strategies that will help our community make progress on these challenging issues.

I certainly can't move beyond Public Health without mentioning the sad state of their building and thank them for their patience as we hopefully finalize our options, to build their new home.

Again, it has been a busy year for Emergency Management with storm related work. The update has been completed on the Hazard Mitigation Plan. In addition the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan has been drafted and the final version will be released soon. Both will be also available on the City Web-site under Emergency Management.

I am pleased to report for the first time we will be offering training to volunteers who are interested in being part of our Community Emergency Response Team also known as CERT. The trainings begin in March and folks can go to the website for registration information.

Lastly, the work that Director Kates and our GIS Director Marino have done to create real-time maps for emergencies to post on line the status of streets, lights and other hazards is without question one of the most creative comprehensive tools to be shared with the whole community.

Our Information Technology division has been busy as well.

The ERP project also referred to as NGIN continues. Think of it as three main components; Financial, Human Capital Management, and Timekeeping. In April 2012 we implemented the Lawson Financial and Procurement software system, that proved somewhat challenging and in January we successfully launched our Human Capital piece, change is not always smooth or easy.....but we have a good team working through the issues and I am confident that this transition will prove worthwhile.

I'd take a moment to thank those team members that are under the radar, Rose Evans our Financial Manager, Doreen Beaulieu our Payroll Manager, Janet Graziano one of our financial managers and Marcia Rogowsky our

application developer in IT who without her capable programming skills, we'd be lost.

I am happy to share that our bandwidth expansion went great! Much information has been added to the city website over the last 4 years, including financial, maps, citizen services, documents and such.

If people can't get there quickly and easily then the value of having it there is diminished. With the new speed, we won't hesitate to continue to grow the wealth of information available. I am proud to share with you that the Sunshine Review gave us an A- rating this year. You may ask why the minus. I asked the same! We were told that if we offered an online payment option for taxpayers we would get an A+....hopefully, we'll be checking that off the list soon. Along with this rating, our Financial Services Division also received its seventh consecutive Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association.

I am pleased to welcome our new IT director, Bruce Codagnone. Bruce comes to us with over thirty years of experience in the computer industry and a track record for delivering complex projects, building high performing teams and deploying technology to enable strategic goals. I am looking forward to working with him as we finalize some important technical transitions and implement current technology as we move forward.

I can't let this opportunity go by without thanking our former IT Director, John Barker. John saw us through some of the most difficult and time consuming efforts to bring the city and our systems into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

He oversaw the initiation and early implementation of our largest project; ERP also known as NGIN. I wish him the best and thank him for his continued support while we searched for Bruce.

Bruce and his staff will be working with us to enhance the user friendliness of project areas on the city's website. Though there is no shortage of information on the website about ongoing projects in the city I think we can do better in making the process of finding what you're looking for a little less intimidating. So, we will be streamlining and reorganizing information so the most current and relevant information is the first thing you see when you click on the link of interest.

Our city departments also have many staff outside the spot light that do a significant amount of heavy lifting especially when they have to pinch hit for someone else, my sincere thanks go to Nick Miseirvitch for his great attitude and above the call of duty approach to overseeing the IT Division while we found our new Director, and thanks to the team, for working through the transition.

The Nashua School District was named a finalist in the US Department of Education's *Race to the Top-District* competitive grant program. The District's \$27 million proposal ranked 28<sup>th</sup> out of the 271 applications for funding. Thanks to those at the school department that worked on that. I know that the work was not in vain and will be utilized by the School Board to implement future programs.

We all know just how busy things have been at Public Works, using our city forces, in 2012, construction began on a much needed facelift in our downtown. Safety and walkability were top priorities.

This spring work will continue with the installation of new mast arms from East Hollis Street to Library Hill and a new crosswalk on the Main Street Bridge. Crews will also continue to replace the sidewalk, resuming work at the Park/Water Street intersection and working south through block 2 and likely 3 in this next construction season. New benches and trash receptacles will also be installed, making Main Street a welcoming destination that showcases the heart of our city. We will continue to work with the local businesses to reduce impacts while we make the needed improvements. In addition to the downtown sidewalks, over 4000 feet of new concrete and asphalt sidewalk had been put in on Arlington Street, Hall Avenue, Webster Street and Pioneer Drive.

Our Parks and Recreation Department has been busy.

In June, out of the rubble of a sad loss to the city of the historic Labine Building we put in to service Park Social at Labine, a comfortable gathering place for all generations to enjoy in a location close to home. It uniquely incorporates many elements from the former building and time in our city history.

And just in time for the City Memorial Day Celebration in May, the World War II Monument at Rail Road Square had major foundation and step repairs completed.

The Mohawk Tannery buildings have been taken down and the debris removed. We expect news by summer from the EPA about our hopes to subdivide a piece from the larger parcel to provide yet another unique pedestrian link to Mine Falls.

The eight entrances to Mine Falls Park received new entrance signs made out of concrete block resembling the granite stone at the Gatehouse.

Another key pedestrian link is moving forward with the city's Riverwalk. Work has begun constructing the trail from Jackson Falls Condominiums to Margaritas Restaurant.

The Nashua River West of the Gatehouse received two Water Chestnut Harvestings. The legislation pending in the Budget Committee to create a fund to begin a more focused look at all the issues and opportunities with our waterways will hopefully garner your support.

And speaking of waterways.....

As you know a key aspect of the Cotton Mill Square project is a major flood control improvement to the City-owned Jackson Falls Dam. The \$850,000 improvement will install an adjustable crest gate on the top of the Dam. This will allow the City to lower the gate when flood conditions are present. The City has experienced so-called 100 year floods with greater frequency in recent years. This crest gate improvement will help to minimize the effect that flood events will have on Downtown Nashua properties upstream of the dam without increasing the impact on properties below the dam. The dam improvements will begin this summer and will be done before Cotton Mill Square is completed.

The Citywide Traffic Signal Management System Upgrades also known as the CMAQ project began last week on the \$2.3 million dollar upgrades to the Citywide Traffic Signal Management System.

It will replace signal control equipment at the remaining 73 intersections throughout the city similar to the upgrade made at the 20 intersections in the DW Highway corridor a few years back. This will ultimately provide our citizens with better service because the new computerized traffic signals will communicate better with each other to improve traffic flow.

Unfortunately, this doesn't mean that you'll never hit another red light when you are running late but it will optimize traffic flow such that the overall waiting time at intersections will be minimized thereby reducing air pollution and aggravation. This means a 15% environmental improvement in some corridors. The project should have minimal impact to drivers during construction as the majority of the work will be done off the roadway. Additionally, the City transportation circulation study also known as the one way street study, has begun for the Downtown area. A meeting with the board will be scheduled soon to get your input and discuss timing and expectations.

Another major step forward..... updating City Hall. Renovation in the Clerk's office and the Elm Street entrance provides a welcoming, customer friendly space. The new directory sign clearly guides visitors to the department they are looking for and the thirty year old carpet was replaced throughout the building. Renovations to both the Ledge St. School and Charlotte Avenue School were completed. We upgraded the Elm Street and High Street

garages; the remaining work there is related to new cameras, electrical work and cosmetic improvements.

The Hunt Memorial Building looks incredible; the restoration is 95% complete. The remaining work was work identified as the renovations were being done. I am hopeful we will be able to complete that with available funds within the year.

As always all departments in the city work together to provide the services that our residents and business have come to expect. A great example of the benefits of working together is negotiating citywide for our energy needs. The City as a whole continues to use third party energy suppliers for electricity and natural gas purchases and has negotiated favorable pricing through June 2015 for electricity and through June 2014 for natural gas. The City and School District have worked together on this initiative to achieve maximum savings.

In Fiscal Year 2012 - the city spent \$422,000 less on electricity and natural gas than it did in FY2011.

Setting aside \$100,000 of these savings, we have brought in legislation to establish an Energy Efficiency Expendable Trust Fund to continue to invest in energy savings measures where it makes sense. In addition, the School District was able to put \$100,000 in an expendable trust fund for school utility costs.

For current fiscal year FY2013, the combined general fund operating budgets were reduced by \$155,000 for electricity and \$200,000 for natural gas from FY2012 levels. A total reduction of \$355,000 which is significant!

Speaking of funds let me tell you a bit about the state of our financials; We continue to maintain healthy fund balance with all three rating agencies giving us high scores citing the city's strong reserve levels, strong financial management, a diverse economy with good wealth indicators and low overall debt burden with rapid amortization as positive credit factors.

Good financial management allowed the city to complete a refunding or a refinancing of bonds that saved the city \$2 million dollars primarily in FY 14 through 17!

The city was able to sell them at an average interest rate of 2.86%. This is an excellent rate and one of the lowest in the city's history. Having our overall bonding capacity well below 20% and our bonding less than 8% of our operating budget has certainly been a factor in our success. It has been worth the work to get it there and keep it there.

Again, let me state my simple and strong belief that Nashua, NH remains the best place in the world to live, work, run a business and raise a family. That didn't happen by accident. I feel fortunate to have more than 87,000 fellow

citizens from diverse backgrounds, who strengthen us with their hard work, education, volunteerism and deep cultural diversity.

In my last two State of the City addresses I have had to outline for you some significant financial concerns arising from increased costs, declining local revenues and decreased state aid including a suspension of revenue sharing along with the increased costs of providing services. As a result, we had to chart a course of action to maintain the city in a prudent fiscal manner. We had to do that during the worst recession since the Great Depression, a period that saw the city's assessed value go from 9.2 billion dollars in 2009 to 8.3 billion in 2010 and although it is slowly moving in the right direction today at 8.5 billion, it is still almost a billion dollars less than it was just three years ago.

The point here isn't the property value at one particular moment. The point is that it is very important to maintain what you have.

Nashua has a strong and deep account of human capital in addition to its financial capital. The solutions we most often come to include what I refer to as three critical legs: our divisions who find efficiencies and make cuts to their budgets along with planning out their needs over a longer period; our citizens who have managed with a slight increase in their taxes; and of course our employees who have picked up a greater share of health care, while receiving a limited wage increase.

Preserving that capital through this recent period of economic distress is the result of many efforts, and I would like to highlight those efforts for you.

Much of the credit goes to our exceptional employee work force, who has maintained their high level of service to the public. For many of them, this has created a greater personal financial burden.

In particular, the city faced rising health care cost in the last few years. 75% of the city budget is devoted to personnel costs, and a large portion of that expense is for health care. In the face of rising health care costs we had to ask city employees to shoulder a greater burden of the risk of those rising costs by adopting a different health care plan design and paying an additional 10% of their premium cost.

Non union, merit employees shouldered that burden first, beginning October 1, 2011. Since the benefits of those merit employees are not collectively bargained, I am particularly grateful at the good grace, good humor and professionalism of our merit employees in meeting that challenge.

I am also very pleased to report that 10 of the city's 15 union employee groups have also met the challenge. I am very proud of those union employees. They agreed to the changes after October 1, 2011, so they also had to decide to agree to pay their increased premium costs retroactively to

that date. That was, to me, a matter of fairness, because I believe all employees should share the burden equitably.

The fact that we could reach such an agreement with those unions was a triumph of the collective bargaining process and I am very grateful for the diligent efforts, good faith and the enlightened self interest it demonstrates, both on the part of the bargaining teams and the union members who voted for the contract. It is a great example of how in Nashua, when the chips are down we all pitch in.

I remain concerned, however, that the 5 employee unions in the Nashua Police Department have not reached the same agreement. Because those employees are working under the previously negotiated contracts they have received the same benefits at a lower cost than their colleagues since October 2011.

By the end of this month that will mean there is a \$438,415 shortfall in contributions by police employees. I call upon the parties negotiating those contracts to reach a reasonable resolution reflecting the same principals of fairness and equity that we have achieved in the other employee contracts. When the chips are down, there is no credible argument for special treatment of discrete groups. We are all in this together.

It is the job of the Nashua Police Commission to make sure that a good faith collective bargaining process occurs and to negotiate final contracts, fair to their employees, but also fairly and equitably reflecting the efforts and sacrifices of all Nashua employees. Ten other unions have found a way to do that with their employer boards. There is no reason for the Police Commission and their unions to fail to do so.

The commission must take the lead in that process and I call them to do so. I pledge any available resources to assist them. In particular, as always, the significant collective bargaining expertise of the city legal department is at their disposal. That resource alone represents almost 50 years of combined experience in the field of labor negotiations. I encourage the commission and the police command staff to make good use of the advice, counsel and services of this outstanding resource.

With the 10% increase in the employee contributions towards the cost of their healthcare plans that have been agreed to in the recent past (with the exception of the Police Department unions), the city has been able to effectively manage the ever increasing cost of healthcare. We have also recently gone out to bid for administrative services for our healthcare plans and we remain hopeful that again additional savings will be realized in FY2014 and beyond.



This year we again have contracts expiring in June. They include Firefighters, School Secretaries, School Custodians and the Library. In August the Teacher and Food Service contracts expire. I am pleased to report those negotiations are underway and I hope resolved before their expiration.

This year our biggest fiscal challenge is the 26% increase the NH Retirement System has passed on to the employers. For Nashua this increase translates to \$3.7 million. We have worked hard to mitigate that and will continue to do so.

This year's CPIU is 2.3% and with the cost of retirement I just mentioned, and in order to maintain a reasonable change to the tax rate; I have requested that Division budgets increase no more than 1% above the FY2013 Adopted Budget.

So as we look forward and plan and budget for the upcoming year let's see where we are with some ongoing projects.

The Broad Street Parkway of course is a major ongoing project in Nashua. We remain on schedule and on budget and unless something significant changes, I should be able to stand before you with next year's State of the City with it on the list of projects slated for completion in 2014. Over the past year, construction advanced on the first roadway contract for the Parkway. Improvements to Pine Street and Palm Street achieved substantial completion by year's end. This project included construction of new pavement, new sidewalks, signalization, storm drainage and sanitary sewer improvements. Traffic calming and provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists were key concerns in this neighborhood project.

Relatively minor work remains for completion in the spring, most notably completion of new mid-block raised crosswalks.

Demolition of the Millyard Boiler House was completed this past year as well. We made the decision not to fill the basement of the boiler building yet, so that when the Parkway is extended through the Millyard in a future contract, there will be a cost effective location for surplus excavated material.

Within the next several months we expect to determine the best approach to use for restoration of the chimney and anticipate that the associated work will be complete by the end of the year.

Also in the Millyard, there is a 40 foot by 70 foot building within the path of the Parkway. This building is commonly referred to as the Waste House or the Shea Building. We are evaluating options to relocate this historically significant building. As we consider possibilities, an important consideration is not just the feasibility of the actual relocation, but also the long term sustainability of the anticipated building use in the new location.

Work continues in the effort to acquire the right-of-way needed for the Parkway. New Hampshire Department of Transportation is performing this effort on behalf of the City.

As the design has progressed, we have strived to reduce or eliminate property impacts wherever possible. Several parcels which were anticipated to be affected have been avoided altogether. We are working closely with New Hampshire DOT to make sure that only the property needed is acquired. The year ahead will be a busy one for the Parkway. There will again be opportunities for discussions and input including ways such as the joint meeting of the Board of Public Works and the Board of Aldermen relative to the Bridge designs.

Many steps will be taken and by year's end major construction will be underway throughout the project.

Pennichuck also maintains a place in the lineup. We have made very good progress transitioning our Pennichuck water utility under public ownership. As our new Pennichuck board has taken steps to bring the company and its operations into this new era of public ownership, we have faced – and no doubt will continue to face – challenges and issues.

One of these challenges is to ensure that the public, including City officials, always can get clear answers to their questions. Operating a public utility is not a simple thing. When questions come up, as they did recently concerning the PUC's "WICA" capital investment process, I know that our senior management team at Pennichuck will provide prompt and accurate answers.

In the WICA case, where an alderman was concerned that a PUC filing by the company involved an unexpected "emergency rate increase," the Pennichuck team provided a detailed response that clarified that the WICA filing was a fully anticipated process for making necessary capital improvements, and that the expected rate impact under the City's ownership would be lower than under the prior, private ownership.

During the upcoming year, as a member of the Pennichuck Board of Directors, I will continue to work to ensure that good communications between the company and the public continue. We should remain proud to have helped bring our City's precious water resources under public control. And I am confident that our board of directors, under the able leadership of Chairman Jay Leonard, will continue to provide well-managed, high quality water service to all 33,000 Pennichuck customers in over 30 communities at lower rates than they would have faced under the old private ownership.

Recent unemployment numbers show Nashua at 6.1%, well below the national rate of 7.8% reflective of our increased growth in economic development.

New companies to Nashua include Waveguide. They are in the process of retrofitting the former US Postal Service facility into a new headquarters for the company and a sister company, New Hampshire Optical Systems. The two companies are leaders in the field of large-scale fiber optic infrastructure installation. New Hampshire Optical Systems has been chosen by State of NH to build out the fiber optic "middle mile" backbone for the State. The company continues to hire aggressively and expects to employ over 140 people by the end of 2013.

In 2012, FLIR continued to grow employment within its Townsend West facility which it acquired in 2010. FLIR specializes in thermal imaging and stabilized camera systems for customers in markets including security, enterprise and defense. The company now has over 300 working in its Nashua location and is poised to grow further.

In October, Aspen Technologies, the Burlington, MA-based software company opened up a major research and development center in the Nashua Technology Park. The office will serve as a center for development work on the company's core software projects and will house up to 150 employees.

In the category of most unusual we have Sky Venture adding to their indoor skydiving adventure the largest indoor surfing facility in North America!

Just as technology is making news in the business community....

I am happy to announce that March 1<sup>st</sup> a majority of city departments will accept credit or debit for over the counter transactions. In mid December we began a quiet soft launch of accepting credit and debit cards for over the counter transactions in the motor vehicle department and community development division. This was very well received and went quite smoothly.

The **really big news** is... we will launch more **on-line services**, including car registrations and dog licenses. The program will continue to expand within other areas of city government and additional options will be added for customers as our capabilities allow, hopefully to include property taxes.

Our goal is to get as many city services as possible available to our citizens in the most accessible way.... 21<sup>st</sup> Century here we come!

Let me fill you in on some other things I see coming into a clearer focus or are on the horizon, such as the City Branding project. Both the City and the Chamber recognized the need to develop a consistent and powerful brand for Nashua. The Branding Platform that will be developed will help to consolidate the multiple messages that tell the story about Nashua into one,

consolidated and consistent message about the positive place that Nashua is in which to do business, live and enjoy life. Phase I was an in-depth research phase of the project that included multiple consumer and resident surveys, focus groups and site visits and has been completed. Phase II, the creative work, is well underway. We expect to roll out the new branding platform sometime in the spring of 2013.

Then there is rail. What a great example of team work. The federal, state and local level we all pulled together in the same direction. The opportunities here are many. If we can continue the momentum, we can make real progress that includes making decisions now to preserve our future options. Such as Crown Street, a park and ride in the near future,.... a potential downtown train stop in the longer term.

In that same general neighborhood, Renaissance recently submitted a site plan for the first phase of the project. This phase would include 170 units of housing and limited retail. Site amenities will include green space and a public waterfront promenade. The first phase is set to break ground in Fall of 2013.

The City is also working closely with the State of New Hampshire DOT and NRPC to plan for an innovative traffic circle at the foot of the Taylor Falls Bridge. The traffic circle currently in the state 10 year plan, would help to improve traffic flow at this notorious traffic bottleneck. The project would also provide better access to the first phase of the Renaissance project and provide a unique opportunity to incorporate sustainable design as part of this traffic improvement.

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission in conjunction with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments has received federal funding through the Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation Program to conduct a study assessing the effectiveness of a south bound off-ramp at Exit 36 on the F.E. Everett Turnpike, near the New Hampshire and Massachusetts border. The study will evaluate traffic flows and potential economic benefits to businesses in the area and will ultimately complete planning analyses in support of the development of a southbound off ramp on US Route 3 at Exit 36 in Tyngsborough, Massachusetts. Not only will it have a positive impact on DW Highway traffic and Spit Brook Road traffic, our hopes are that the information confirms its viability for a multi-modal transit center.

In particular I would like to thank DOT Commissioner Chris Clement for his willingness to collaborate and go the extra mile providing an environment where we can all work together to solve issues and maintain momentum whether it is the rail work or the Parkway, we have come to rely on his leadership and cooperation.

Also thanks go out to Representative David Campbell for his insight and advocacy helping us get the support needed from the Capital Budget Overview Committee to get the needed match funds for Crown Street and of course Councilor Pignatelli for her continued support for rail and for moving the corridor study forward. That study is slated to be complete in 18 months, armed with that information the hard decisions can be made about the next steps.

Speaking of next steps, I am working on the makeup of a committee to work on recommendations for a new location for the David Deane Skateboard Park. This relocation as all of you know is necessary due to the redevelopment of the Bridge Street site. I would like to thank Alderman Deane for agreeing to serve on this committee and am hopeful that the members will all be named and work will begin by March.

We have not had the progress some of us would like to see on the Greeley Park Band Shell. We started work on that project to make it more aesthetically pleasing and acoustically sound more than a year ago. The designs we received were not all we had hoped. Alderman Pressly brought in legislation to try and replicate the work that was done by the International Design Competition for the Parkway, that legislation requested the members from the former group be again asked to serve for the band shell.

I extended the invitation to the members and of those who responded all but one said they could not serve. So we are back at the drawing board. I am moving forward with seating a new committee. Tracy Hatch has agreed to chair this new committee and Alderman Pressly has agreed to be a member as well. Perhaps the third time will be the charm!

Speaking of Greeley Park there is a movement afoot to rebuild the old playground there where the existing one is, but instead of replicating what is there, the idea is to build what is being called a legacy playground. A wonderful example of what can happen when a constituent has an idea. Patience Kanarian, a young women in our community brought to our attention her concern about having a playground accessible to all. This includes parents or grandparents bringing their able-bodied children to play, or children with autism having an appropriate place to play within the community. Take that idea, add a enthusiastic group of young leaders, and the director of a local nonprofit serving those with disabilities and you have all the right ingredients for success.

Thanks to the efforts of many, particularly the 2012 class of Leadership Greater Nashua, this playground will be built at approximately a quarter of a million dollars completely through the donations of others. I very much look

forward to the next discussion at the Board of Public Works followed closely by one to you, to introduce you to these young leaders and their efforts.

The Nashua Telegraph did a fantastic job of recognizing the top 50 business leaders from the past 50 years in Nashua in their recent Nashua 50/20 publication. They also unveiled 20 leaders who they believe are making a difference in the city and who will likely emerge among the next set of leaders. The Telegraph will quickly admit they in no way exhausted the list of business leaders or potential leaders. Much like the risk I run this evening of highlighting just a few of the many that can come to mind at a moment's notice, they too, had to decide whom to identify.

Tonight I would like to suggest that there is emerging a group of young leaders that will surely secure Nashua's future for decades to come.

Kendall Reyes, our local football claim to fame making it to the NFL. Kendall, as a young athlete with a promising future ahead of him is already making it a priority to give back to the community that he feels has given him so much. Kendall is working with organizations in Nashua to establish programs for the youth of our city to engage in skill and character building. He recognizes what others have done for him, what his success in football will enable him to do for others, and that he can have a positive impact on the community that he calls home, no matter what field he is playing on. Congratulations to Kendall on his success and thanks to him for his desire and efforts to share his success with the youth of Nashua.

Just as Kendall, a recent high school graduate is leaving his mark on our community other students attending and graduating from our high schools will do the same. I would like to mention and congratulate Allison Thompson, a Nashua High School South senior, who will be traveling to Washington, DC to meet with President Obama as one of two New Hampshire students selected as a delegate to the 51<sup>st</sup> annual US Senate Youth Program.

Nashua has a strong backbone of leaders and servants. I see a future of regeneration that will support this city no matter what the future holds.

Sadly, we lost valued members of our community over the last year. Some of them include;

Dot Nice, widely known as the 16<sup>th</sup> Alderman, never shy to share her thoughts, suggestions and time, underneath the tough exterior she had a big heart.

My dear friend Lucy Cudhea, who always put the best of her city first. She counted both the famous, and the not so infamous among her friends. Lucy never missed a beat on Nashua happenings, or an opportunity to make you smile.

And just recently our friend and colleague Dick LaRose, a true good government guy, who was thoughtful and pragmatic about government, his stated goal; do a good job. He without a doubt succeeded. From the Hunt Memorial to the Planning Board and city policy as an Alderman, his imprint will long serve our community well.

I know we are all pleased that there is now a "Richard LaRose Way" in our city, with a dedication on the horizon.

I know one of the most important things Lucy wanted to do before she passed was to vote in the state and federal election in November.

I want to thank the City Clerk and his staff for their efforts in conducting a smooth and what appeared seamless to us, election in Nashua. Voter turnout for the 2012 election was record setting with 7,310 new voters registering at the polls that day. The clerk and his staff didn't do that alone. I want to thank the many poll workers across the city that spent a long day making sure every qualified voter that wanted to vote had the opportunity. Amazing things can and do happen when people work cooperatively and toward the same goal. Though specific goals may vary and contrast, I believe it is everyone's goal to improve the city they call home and leave it a better place for their children and grandchildren.

I'll close this evening with a nod to Kendall Reyes by calling on a quote from Vince Lombardi, famed NFL coach. He said, "The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual." Instead of thinking of Nashua as an organization I am looking at it as a cohesive team. A team made up of caring individuals concerned for the overall good where each role is necessary. So whether a person is a ticket-buying fan in the stands cheering on the team; or someone sweeping the locker room, or grooming the field, or driving the bus, or writing the playbook, or carrying the ball into the endzone, everyone has a part to play.

When future generations look back at this time and see a thriving community in difficult times they will see that our achievements were not due to a collection of unrelated personal accomplishments, but rather the results of a strong team working together to leave a legacy of teamwork and a place to be proud of.

I am so grateful to be a part of the team! Thank you for your kind attention this evening.

